

Remarks

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, favorable reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10, 12-15, 17-18 and claim 20 remain in this application. Claims 11, 16, 19 and 21-27 have been canceled. Claim 1-3, 5-6, 9-10, 13-15, and 17-18 have been amended. New claims 28-38 have been added.

Applicants express their appreciation for the Examiner's allowance of claim 9, and the statement that claims 10-15 would be allowable if the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph rejections were overcome.

§ 112 Rejections

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicants believe the following amendments overcome the rejection:

Claims 1 and 10 have been amended to eliminate reference to "glazing";
Claim 17 has been amended to simplify flame polishing.

The Examiner has rejected claims 25-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Claims 25-27 have been canceled.

§ 102 Rejections

The Examiner has rejected claims 25 and 26 under § 102 as being clearly anticipated by Kamiya et al. (US 4,772,303). Claims 25-26 have been canceled.

§ 103 Rejections

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 5-7 and 23-27 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Segawa et al. (US 4,938,788) taken alone. The Examiner argues, inter alia, that it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make a green body with a non-porous exterior and a porous interior, and illustrates the argument with a comparison between the green body of Segawa and the

green body of the present invention. Applicants believe the amendments to claim 1 overcome the rejection. Segawa et al. do not disclose providing a green body, heating the green body to form a composite body having a non-porous exterior and a porous interior, forming a vacuum in the interior portion of the composite body, and pressing the composite body in a hot isostatic pressing technique. Applicants contend that claim 1 is therefore allowable over Segawa et al., and that claims 2-9, and 20, which depend from claim 1, are therefore also allowable. Claims 23-27 have been canceled.

Conclusion

Applicants assert that the prior art made of record and not relied upon has no particular pertinence to the patentability of Applicants' disclosure.

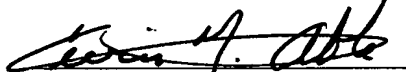
Based upon the above amendments, remarks, and papers of record, Applicants believe the pending claims of the above-captioned application are in allowable form and patentable over the prior art of record. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the pending claims 1-10, 12-15, 17-18, 20 and 28-38 and a prompt Notice of Allowance thereon.

Applicants believe that a one month extension of time is necessary to make this Response timely, and respectfully request that the Office grant such time extension pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) as necessary to make this Reply timely, and hereby authorize the Office to charge any necessary fee or surcharge with respect to said time extension to the deposit account of the undersigned firm of attorneys, Deposit Account 03-3325.

Please direct any questions or comments to Kevin M. Able at 607-974-2637.

Respectfully submitted,

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